

Advice for Early Years and Special School settings

This guidance has been developed by the Government of Jersey to support the EYFS settings and Special Schools which will be opening to eligible children during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

This guidance is based on the following assumptions:

- Anyone who is unwell or has flu-like symptoms will not attend the setting
- Anyone connected with the setting who meets the criteria for self-isolation will observe this
- All households directly connected with the setting will fully observe social distancing guidance
- Anyone who becomes unwell or develops flu-like symptoms, whilst at the setting, will be immediately isolated (as far as possible/appropriate) and sent home
- All staff will fully adhere to all pre-existing requirements and policies relevant to their setting unless new guidance issued as part of the COVID-19 response, specifically asks them to do something different
- That the setting has an appropriate infection control policy which is fully adhered to at all times
- The setting will establish and follow stringent and consistent hand, surface and touch surface and respiratory hygiene practices
- Settings will work to observe social distancing principles as far as possible, ensuring that the care, safety and health of children is paramount
- Existing legal requirements will be adhered to at all times.

1. Children eligible to attend

The following groups of children should continue to attend their usual EYFS setting in States Primary schools and Special Schools (i.e. the setting where they are already on-roll.)

- The children of critical employees (See 2 below)
- Children under the care of a Paediatrician who have been cleared to attend¹
- Vulnerable children identified as a priority by the Children and Families Hub

If a setting is unable to follow this guidance due to concerns about the numbers of children who would be eligible to attend, the following criteria can be applied if agreed by the Head of Early Years:

1. (a) Children under the care of a Paediatrician, who have been cleared to attend, AND
(b) Children of critical employees who are single parents or in dual-parent households where both parents are critical employees, AND
(c) Vulnerable children identified as a priority by the Children and Families Hub
2. Children from dual-parent households where only one parent is a critical employee
3. The admission of siblings of the children included in groups 1 and 2 above, whose normal settings are closed, would be at the absolute discretion of the head teacher.

2. Critical employees are defined as follows:

¹ Jersey's Paediatricians are writing to the parents of all the children under their care with bespoke advice about whether or not their child should attend their normal setting, if it remains open.

- Government health and care workers
- Employees part of the formal emergency response structures for the Government as directed by the Chair of the Strategic Coordination Group (Gold)
- Public protection agencies (police, ambulance, fire, prison, customs and immigration)
- Social workers and residential childcare workers
- Teaching staff and support staff where they are required for school and early years
- provision to be safe (i.e. ratios and specific support for SEN children).

3. Attendance and communication

Children, teachers, nursery staff, support workers and other support staff **MUST NOT** attend the setting if:

- they are unwell
- they meet the criteria for [self-isolation](#)
- their household has not fully adopted the Government of Jersey's social distancing guidance, (other than in the performance of their duties as critical employees)

Anyone with flu-like symptoms (**a new, continuous cough and/or fever**) should be isolated as far as is safe and practicable and sent home as soon as possible. Isolation should be for a minimum of 7 days or until they are at least 48 hours clear of symptoms. These symptoms may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

- headaches
- tiredness
- muscle ache
- respiratory symptoms besides cough such as a sore throat, blocked or runny nose

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible and if appropriate, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door. Ideally a room with a viewing panel in the wall or door should be selected for this purpose.

Settings should be mindful of individual children's needs – for example, it would not be appropriate for younger children to be alone without adult supervision. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible, or appropriate to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least two metres away from other people. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible.

Parents of children who have underlying medical conditions should make sure that these are as well managed and monitored as possible. A child's attendance should be reviewed if this is not possible.

Settings should be proactive in updating the emergency and health practitioner contacts for each child. These may change as a result of the community wide social distancing guidance and the observation of self-isolation by those ordinarily involved in a child's care.

4. Return to a setting following illness

Section 2:5 of the [Statutory Requirements for Early Years settings](#) addresses the issue of medicines, illness, injuries and infection control.

All settings must have a written infection control policy.

Settings should review and update all their policies in line with the Government of Jersey's advice about COVID-19, ensuring that children and staff do not return to the setting too soon. The figure used for the duration of exclusion following illness should be the higher of those detailed in the setting's policy and the Government of Jersey's public health guidance.

5. Adult/child minimum ratios

Article 4 (1) (a) of the Day Care of Children (Jersey) Law 2002 requires the Minister to determine the maximum number of children that can be cared for within specified age ranges at any one time.

These ratios represent the minimum that must continue to be observed in all settings.

Ratios are set out in Sections 1.5-1.6 of the and Sections 1.4 to 1.5 of the .**6. Operationalising social distancing in EYFS and Special School settings**

Social distancing means limiting unnecessary contact with people outside of your household unless absolutely essential. **It means keeping to a distance of 2 metres (6 feet) from others.**

We recognise that full observation of social distancing in EYFS and Special School settings is not possible due to the levels of support required by children, the need to provide intimate care and toileting and the ways in which children naturally interact with each other and adults.

Section 3.3. of the [Statutory Requirements for Early Years settings](#) establishes minimum indoor space requirements for these settings. In order to observe social distancing guidance, settings need to ensure that **the minimum space per child increases to at least 4m²**. Although adherence to a minimum of 4m² per child, when calculating the numbers in each room, will satisfy the guidance for social distancing in principle, success in practice will be dependant on how settings plan and manage activities which encourage children to remain at least 2 metres away from each other. Settings should work to maximise their space per child, as far as possible beyond this minimum; this will be supported by the limited number of children who will be eligible to attend.

Unless there is a requirement to work closely with one or more other staff members, adults should observe social distancing principles between each other. Where possible consider grouping staff so they work closely with a minimum number of colleagues. See: [Advice on Social Distancing](#).

Where there is a need to use Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI), this should be in line with the . Head teachers should consider the number of MAYBO trained staff who will be on site, in planning for reduced staffing levels at this time.

The following key principles should be acted on to protect everyone:

A. Observe stringent and consistent hygiene and infection control

- Everyone must [wash their hands regularly and thoroughly](#)
- Everyone must follow good respiratory hygiene practices (use and disposal of wipes and tissues)
- Ensure stringent surface and touch surface hygiene- repeated as needed throughout the day - also see below

- Masks should not be used unless this is already your normal practice
- Children should be encouraged to avoid touching their face as far as possible
- Signs and posters reminding everyone to do this should be displayed prominently throughout the setting
- Establish handwashing stations and provide tissues and lined disposal receptacles throughout the setting at entrances, in classrooms, toilets, canteens and cloakrooms, making sure dispensers are regularly refilled, tissues replenished and waste receptacles emptied and re-lined. (See disposal of waste guidance below)
- Staff should ensure parents/carers perform hand hygiene before entering and after leaving the facility.
- All staff should familiarise themselves with the setting's existing infection control procedures and follow these carefully at all times
- Key surfaces and equipment should be disinfected and cleaned at least daily or more frequently (e.g. tables, desks, doors, doorknobs, railings, windows, toilet cubicles, handles, IT equipment, toys, books and apparatus). Where appropriate, children can be asked to help clean surfaces, such as keyboards, desk and tabletops, and chair arms, before and after use
- Sanitize cots/mats daily
- Launder your nap and outerwear items more frequently
- Staff uniforms should be laundered at least daily, more often if soiled. Make allowances for staff to wear their own clean clothes if the requirement to increase laundering of uniforms means there is a shortage
- Dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils should not be shared and washed thoroughly with soap and water or in a dishwasher if one is available
- Towels, bedding and other linens should be laundered after use and not reused
- Agreed, robust procedures for daily sanitation, waste management, cleaning and decontamination should be in place with relevant supplies available (e.g. cleaning products, bin bags, gloves etc.)²
- Disposal of waste: all used tissues, soiled nappies should be disposed securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely, and kept separate from other waste. These may be disposed of straightaway in the usual bin as all household style rubbish is incinerated in Jersey.
- The setting's first aid kit should be reviewed and replenished.
- Where applicable, toothbrushing should continue

B. Review and revise your setting's practical arrangements

NB: not everything below will apply in all the settings covered by this guidance

- Take a whole-setting approach to ensure measures are co-ordinated across year groups
- Stagger the start and end of the day, breaks and lunch times to avoid large groups and close contact between parents/carers, children and staff
- Stagger outdoor sessions, where applicable
- Cancel assemblies and other whole group activities, e.g. trips and outings, if applicable
- Review/suspend PE and performing arts activities, if applicable
- Stagger timings of change overs between rooms/lessons so everyone is not on the move at the same time

² [Public Health England: COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings](#)

- Review the need for children and staff to move around the setting if not essential
- Support parents to review children’s transportation to and from the setting if this is not in accordance with social distancing principles.
- Review arrangements for the preparation, storage and consumption of meals and snacks
- Cancel all community bookings or clubs taking place outside of school/college hours and cancel if needed

C. Review and revise how you use the physical space and organise activities

- Update or review entry and exit points to ensure there is control over who can access the setting
- Aim to restrict access to the setting to agreed target children, their parents/carers, staff and support staff only
- Find ways to maximise the space between children throughout the day by separating seating, cots/baby seats, mats, wheelchairs and play equipment by at least one metre. This may mean allocating children to small groups (in accordance with the applicable adult/child ratio) who can be assigned to a specific area/room
- Adapt planned activities to minimise large group work
- Suspending and activities or lessons which cannot be adapted to accommodate the principles of social distancing
- Ensure good ventilation, open windows. It is not necessary to switch off A/C.

D. Involve children in success

- Find ways to make these changes fun for children; rewarding and praising their contribution to motivate their continued engagement and co-operation
- Listen to children, answer their questions and involve them in the development of the setting’s response to Coronavirus where possible (See [UNCRC Article 12](#))³
- Keep parents/carers informed so they can support the measures you out in place^{4,5}
- Work to create a positive culture of creating space and avoiding contact
- Establish a ‘[Snuffle Station](#)’ as a fun way to promote good hygiene – guidance is available from the National Day Nurseries Association
- Where appropriate and with supervision, children can be asked to help clean surfaces, such as keyboards, desk and table tops, and chair arms, before and after use
- Provide and reinforce age-appropriate information to understand and destigmatise coronavirus using a range of resources^{6,7}
- Be alert to everyone’s mental and physical health and wellbeing

Key Links:

The following guidance has been developed by UNICEF and the Department for Education with Public Health England and will support schools/colleges to plan and review their procedures:

³ [How teachers can talk to children about coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)

⁴ [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): What parents should know](#)

⁵ [Guidance for parents and carers about coronavirus](#)

⁶ [GOV.JE Flyers and posters for print about coronavirus](#)

⁷ [MENCAP: Information about Coronavirus \(PDF\)](#)

[UNICEF: Key Messages and Actions for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools](#)

[DfE / PHE: COVID-19: guidance for education settings](#)

Also see:

National Day Nurseries Association: [Frequently asked questions from nurseries and early years providers about Coronavirus / COVID-19](#)

HealthyChildren.org: [Reducing the spread of illness in Childcare](#)